

CLAIMS:

I claim for my invention:

(Independent Claim)

1. Emergency hailing method comprising steps of:

5 equipping an at-risk user with a portable emergency hailer including at least an
active mode and an abeyant mode;

periodically initiating the active mode;

commencing a first timing interval running concurrent with the active mode;

first cuing the at-risk user upon the onset of the active mode to promptly respond by

10 submitting a manual acknowledgment;

first determining a timely submission of the manual acknowledgment during the first

timing interval and thereupon return the emergency hailer to the abeyant
mode;

second determining a lacking of the timely submission of the manual

15 acknowledgment and consequentially effectuate an emergency signal state;

whereby the emergency signal state may be interpretatively indicative of the at-risk

user's condition being unknown and potentially requiring assistance.

2. The emergency hailer method of claim 1 comprising further steps of:

first configuring the portable emergency hailer to be physically wearable as a vigilant

20 appurtenance by the at-risk user and to include a provision for accepting the
manual acknowledgment;

sending an encoded alert signal to a local base station in immediate response to the

emergency signal state; and,

configuring the local base station to receive the encoded alert signal and produce an alarm signal;

3. The emergency hailer method of claim 1 comprising a further step of:

serving a plurality of the at-risk users to include a first client user and at least a second client user;

first configuring a first portable emergency hailer including the provision for submitting the manual acknowledgment, and optionally, to be physically worn as a first vigilant appurtenance by the first client user;

first initiating a first encoded alert signal in response to the behindhand submission of the manual acknowledgment of the first cue by the first client user;

first sending the first encoded alert signal to a local base station sited in association with the plurality of at-risk users;

a second cuing of a second client user to promptly submit the manual acknowledgment of the second cuing event;

second configuring a second portable emergency hailer including the provision for submitting the manual acknowledgment, and optionally, to be physically worn as a second vigilant appurtenance by the second client user;

second initiating a second encoded alert signal in response to the behindhand occurrence of the manual acknowledgment of the second cue by the second client user;

second transmitting the second encoded alert signal to the local base station sited in association with the plurality of at-risk users; and,

configuring the local base station to receive at least one of the first encoded alert
signal and the second encoded alert signal and respond by at least one of
producing an alarm signal and sending a first emergency signal.

whereby, the alert signal encoding enables a single local base station to be uniquely
responsive to each one of a plurality of at-risk users ordinarily sharing an
inhabitancy.

4. The emergency hailer method of claim 2 comprising further steps of:

sending a periodically recurrent wireless check signal from the portable emergency
hailer to the local base station;

determining an absence of reception of the wireless check signal by the local base
station for a period of time exceeding a predetermined limit and producing an
interruption state signal;

second configuring the local base station to emanate at least one of activating a
local telltale signal and produce a fault signal in response to the interruption
state signal.

5. The emergency hailer method of claim 1 comprising further steps of:

configuring the local base station to respond to the emergency state signal and
automatically dial at least one care-provider's emergency telephone number;
and,

sending a predetermined emergency message signal to the care-provider who may
answer the emergency telephone number.

6. The emergency hailer method of claim 5 comprising further steps of:

confirming receipt of the predetermined emergency message signal by at least one
of a first dialed primary care-provider and a subsequently dialed first backup
care-provider;

urging the primary care-provider who may answer the dialed emergency telephone
number to acknowledge receipt by returning a response signal ordinarily
initiated by pressing a predetermined dial keypad button; and,
alternatively dialing a backup care-provider's emergency telephone number in
absence of a timely return of the response signal by a previously dialed
primary care-provider.

7. The emergency hailer method of claim 1 comprising further steps of:

deriving an at-risk user's response trend value by ascertaining a time elapse which
occurs between the cuing of the at-risk user and the submission of the
manual acknowledgment of the cuing event; and,

reducing the first timing interval in proportion to an increase in the at-risk user's
response trend value;

whereby a slow-down and resulting increase in the delay of the at-risk user's
response to a cue results in a more frequently recurring cuing event.

8. The emergency hailer method of claim 1 comprising further steps of:

finding an at-risk user's response trend value in the time elapse which occurs
between the cuing of the at-risk user and the submission of the manual
acknowledgment of the cuing event; and,

increasing the first timing interval in proportion to a decrease in the at-risk user

response trend value;

whereby a quickening in the at-risk user's response to a cue results in a less frequently recurring cuing event.

(Independent Claim)

5 9. Emergency hailing method for confirming a probable state of well-being of an at-risk user, comprising steps of:

equipping the at-risk user with a personal transponder effectuating an ordered pattern of active and abeyant modes;

periodically setting the personal transponder to an active mode;

10 initiating a first timed interval upon onset of the active mode;

delivering a sensory cue to the at-risk user upon onset of the active mode;

urging the at-risk user to promptly respond to the sensory cue by submitting a manual acknowledgment of the cuing event;

15 resetting the abeyant mode in response to the manual acknowledgment being timely occurrent during the first timed interval; and,

evoking an emergency state signal upon finding a deficient response to the sensory cue.

10. The emergency hailing method of claim 9 comprising further steps of:

establishing a first interlinking of a ranging signal between the personal transponder and a local base station;

20 enabling the periodical setting of the active mode in a determined presence of the first interlinking of the ranging signal; and,

disabling the active mode in a determined lacking of the first interlinking of the

ranging signal.

11. The emergency hailing method of claim 10 comprising further steps of:

first finding the manual acknowledgment to be timely submitted when it occurs
effectively subsequent to an onset of the active mode and prior to a
conclusion of the first timed interval; and otherwise,
second finding the deficient response to include one of a lacking and a behindhand
submission of the manual acknowledgment by the at-risk user;
whereby the evoking of the emergency state signal may hail a care-provider.

12. The emergency hailing method of claim 9 comprising a further step of:

establishing a second timed interval to determine the periodical setting of the active
mode;
measuring duration of a third time lapse between onset of the active mode and a
resetting of the abeyant mode prompted by a timely occurrence of the
manual acknowledgment;
redefining the first timed interval to decrease relative with a decrease in the
measured duration of third time lapse; and,
selectively determining the second timed interval to exercise one of preferably
increasing and otherwise decreasing in duration relative with a decrease in
the measured duration of the third time lapse.

13. The emergency hailing method of claim 9 comprising further steps of:

auto-dialing a first care-provider's emergency telephone number in an immediate
response to the emergency state signal;

signaling the evocation of the emergency state signal to the first care-provider.

14. The emergency hailing method of claim 13 comprising further steps of:

urging the first care-provider to acknowledge notification by manually submitting a
responson signal by pressing at least one predesignated Touchtone™
keypad button; and otherwise,
finding the responson lacking and subsequently auto-dialing an alternate care-
provider's emergency telephone number.

15. The emergency hailing method of claim 9 comprising further steps of:

configuring the personal transponder as a wearable personal wireless transmitter
including a manually operable response actuator;
sending a first wireless signal initiated by an onset of the active mode to a local
wireless base station receiver;
sending a second wireless signal to the base station receiver when initiated by the
prompt manual acknowledgment of the cuing event by the at-risk user;
commencing elapse a first timed interval upon receipt of the first wireless signal by
the base station receiver;
first determining the second wireless signal to be timely received during the first
timed interval thereby terminating further elapse of the first timed interval;
second finding a lacking of the timely reception of the second wireless signal during
the elapse of the first timed interval thereby evoking the emergency state
signal.

16. The emergency hailing method of claim 9 comprising further steps of:

equipping the at-risk user with a manually actuated switch device suitable for
submitting the manual acknowledgment of the sensory cue;
urging the at-risk user to promptly actuate the manual switch device;
establishing a measure of promptness for the actuation of the manual switch device
5 relative with the first timed interval as a measure of response timeliness by
the at-risk user.

(Independent Claim)

17. Emergency hailing apparatus including a portable and usually wearable appurtenance
immediately associated with an at-risk user, whereby the appurtenance comprises:
10 state defining means having an abeyant mode and an active mode;
first timer means for periodically setting the state defining means to the active mode;
sensible cuing means initiated by an onset of the active mode and effective for
urging the at-risk user to submit a manual response;
manual actuator means operable by the at-risk user for asserting the manual
15 response and returning the state defining means to an abeyant mode;
second timer means measuring elapse of a second time interval incipient with the
onset of the active mode;
first determinator means for confirming the at-risk user's manual response assertion
to timely occur coincidental with the active mode and thereupon return the
20 state defining means to the abeyant mode; and,
second determinator means for evoking an emergency state signal when the at-risk
user's manual response is found lacking for the duration of the active mode;
whereby, a failure by the at-risk user to promptly respond to a sensible cue may be

interpreted as a probable cause for concern regarding the at-risk user's medical or physical well-being and as a reason for the evocation of the emergency state signal.

18. The emergency hailing apparatus of claim 17 further comprising:

5 the wearable appurtenance comprising one of a pendant means and a bracelet means; and further including:

the manual actuator means; and,

a wireless sending means for remotely dispatching a datum signal to a base station means; and,

10 base station means for receiving and further processing the remotely dispatched datum signal in effectual conjunction with one of the first determinator means and the second determinator means.

19. The emergency hailing apparatus of claim 17 further comprising:

15 auto-dialing means responsive to the emergency state signal and configured to automatically dial at least one predetermined care-provider's telephone number; and,

messaging means effective to impart an emergency message to a care-provider answering the automatically dialed said telephone number.

20. The portable emergency hailing apparatus of claim 19 further comprising:

20 riposte determinator means recognizing a reciprocative key signal submitted by the answering care-provider in response to a protocol instruction; and otherwise, reenabling the auto-dialing means to effectively dial another care-provider's

telephone number when the presently called care-provider does not enter the distinctive key signal in accord with the protocol instructions; whereby, failure to enter the distinctive key signal indicates that the called party is not available and an alternate party is called.